



### *On the road to Shanghai*

#### Aruba's special athletes prepare for the International Special Olympics 2007

The days are drawing closer, and in a scant two months Aruba's team of fourteen special athletes will depart for Shanghai, China to compete in the International Special Olympics conducted every four years. The final team was recently announced, and Arturo Werleman and Netty Williams, who head the Special Olympics Committee are still busy raising the fund to take the team to China.

This past Friday, Enrita Arias, Director of Man Na Obra, a center for mentally challenged adults hosted the team and their parents, along with a number of the coaches at her home in Palm Beach. It was a fun evening devoted to the team getting to know each other better, as did a number of the parents and members of the official delegation that will travel with them. Team members consist of Riazel Jansen, Ronald Feliciano, Deshka Lesandrina, Gabriella Samson, Jhorzy Arias, Michael Wouters, Zaina Maduro, Deshaneira Mohamad, Jacqueline Giel, Raynold Wernet, Vanessa Bernabela, Mark Gonzalez, Juliette Oduber, and Brian Kuiperdal.

The team departs on September 26 to participate in the games that will be held from October 2 to 11. Aruba's team will compete in four of the twenty-five sport disciplines of the Special Olympics; Bowling, Table Tennis, Track and Field, and Swimming. Aruba has a particularly strong swimming team that has brought back several gold and silver medals from meets around the Caribbean, often dominating the competitions.

Though a number of fund raising events have been held over the past year, Arturo Werleman revealed that the team is still short by approximately 30,000 Aruban Florins (\$17,000) of the necessary funds to make the trip. Those wishing to contribute to sending Aruba's special athletes to Shanghai can donate directly to their RBTT bank account 4056892. In various locations around the island, collection cans have been placed where those wishing to can drop their loose change and donations. They can be found at Botica Santa Ana in Noord, Fruiteria Virgilio, Eagle Bowling Palace, and branches of Aruba Bank. Additional cans are at Nautilus Travel, the Divi Links Golf Course, Banco di Caribe, catochi offices in Pos Chiquito and Piedra Plat, and the offices of Island Finance. Island visitors, upon departure, will find there is a can at the American Airlines check-in desk, and they can deposit their leftover Aruban change, knowing it will go to a worthy cause.